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BROWNBACK, ROBERTS, BOND, ASHCROFT SUPPORT KANSAS CITY-BASED VANGUARD AIRLINES IN ATTEMPT TO OPEN COMPETITIVE NON-STOP FLIGHTS TO DC

WASHINGTON – U.S. Sens. Sam Brownback, Pat Roberts, Kit Bond, and John Ashcroft today sent a letter to Rodney E. Slater, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation supporting Kansas City-based Vanguard Airlines in their attempt to secure access to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport in Washington, DC. Text of the letter follows.

“We are writing to express our support for Kansas City-based Vanguard Airlines application for four Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) slot exemptions. By granting these exemptions you will provide critically needed competitive non-stop service between Kansas City and DCA.

“Vanguard fully complies with the key eligibility requirements under the FAIR-21 Act for the exemptions that are available to carriers for service within the DCA perimeter. Vanguard is a ‘new entrant’ as defined in FAIR-21, Kansas City is a ‘medium hub’ airport, and Vanguard’s applications establishes that Kansas City-DCA has long been a monopoly non-stop market that needs and can support competitive non-stop service.

“Vanguard’s proposal to provide two daily non-stop round trip flights between Kansas City and National Airport will inject critically needed low cost competition in this important non-stop market. Vanguard is a low-fare airline based in Kansas City and says that it plans to offer low fares to the local Kansas City-DCA non-stop market as well as between DCA and Chicago, Dallas/Fort Worth, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Denver via connections at Kansas City. Thus the application is consistent with FAIR-21’s intent to award the exemptions to carriers that would produce ‘maximum competitive benefits, including, low fares.’

“We believe that the consumer and competitive benefits that will result from Vanguard’s proposed Kansas City-DCA non-stop service deserve the Department’s highest priority. We look forward to your favorable consideration of Vanguard’s application.”